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SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA; NSC FOR SHAPIRO/KUMAR; JOINT
STAFF FOR LTGEN SELVA

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SUBJECT: FATAH CONGRESS: DAHLAN'S BACK, PROGRAM IN DRAFT,
VOTING DELAYED

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

11. (C) Key developments on the third day of the Fatah Congress included an apparent deal on elections and the formation of committees to address, inter alia, the political program and Fatah bylaws.

12. (C) After publicly threatening to boycott Fatah Central Committee (FCC) elections over the issue of ensuring Gazan representation in Fatah leadership bodies, Mohammed Dahlan reached a compromise with Abu Mazen late on August 5, according to Fatah contacts. The compromise reportedly includes reserving six FCC seats for Gazans: three of them will be filled in leadership elections at the Congress, and three will be voted upon later by absent Gaza delegates. Dahlan said on August 6, backing away from his threat, that "creative solutions" are under discussion to address the issue of Gaza participation.

13. (C) During the August 6 session, delegates formed 18 committees tasked with reporting back on issues ranging from prisoners to settlements. Sources on the political committee reported that a political program draft will circulate either late August 6 or August 7. A separate organizational committee with responsibility for the bylaws plans to do the same.

14. (C) Congress Chair Othman Abu Gharbiyeh announced that delegates can declare their candidacy for leadership elections beginning the evening of August 6, and until the morning of August 7. Elections are officially scheduled for the evening of August 7, but will likely be delayed to August 8 or later, according to Fatah sources, due to continued internal deliberation. As a result, Abu Mazen advisor Nimer Hamad predicted, the Congress is unlikely to adjourn before August 9.
WALLES